

YUMA COUNTY LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA

Geography

Yuma County is one of four original Arizona counties and was created by the first territorial legislature of 1864. It is located in the extreme southwest corner of Arizona bordered by Mexico and California.

Population

According to the most recent official population figures, produced by AZ DES, Census 2000 data shows 160,026 people reside in Yuma County. This resident population accounts for about 3 percent of Arizona's total population. In the ten years since the 1990 census, Yuma County's population grew by nearly 50 percent, or roughly 4.2 percent annually compared to the state as a whole which grew over 40 percent for the decade. Yuma is the largest city in the county, with an estimated population of 77,515. San Luis is the next largest, with an estimated population of 15,322.

Income

According to data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis from 1990 to 1999, local total personal income in Yuma County increased 72.2 percent compared to the State's roughly 90 percent. However, on a per capita basis, the gain of 36.7 percent was 9.6 percent below the State's growth of 46.3 percent. Yuma County per capita income was \$18,452 in 1999, about 73.3 percent of the state average, down from 78.4 percent in 1990. Average earnings per job increased 0.6 percent in 1999 – less than the gain for the state at 4.1 percent.

Labor Force

The Yuma County labor force fell roughly 1 percent each year from 1995 to 2000. Yuma employment figures fell less, however, with an average annual decrease of 0.6 percent. This affected the unemployment rate from 28.2 percent in 1995 to 27.5 percent in 2000.

Employment

While agriculture related occupations continue to dominate the employment opportunities in Yuma County, the nonfarm sector has been growing at a healthy 2.6 percent annually during 1995-2000. Construction led all industry sectors with average yearly growth of 9.3 percent during 1995-2000. Manufacturing was the second fastest growing sector for the same period with average yearly growth of 6.3 percent.

Growing and Declining

During the year 2000, the largest industry job growth was experienced in recreational vehicle dealers (+233 jobs), residential building construction (+161 jobs), and miscellaneous shopping goods stores (+140 jobs). The largest employment losses appeared in motor vehicles, parts and supplies (-1,324 jobs), farm labor and management services (-738 jobs), and management and public relations (-383 jobs). For further details see the enclosed tables.

Forecast

Research Administration is forecasting employment to rise by 2.0 percent in PY 01-02 and another 3.1 percent in PY 02-03. Countywide unemployment is expected to decrease slightly from the PY 00-01 rate of 26.2 percent to 25.3 percent in PY 01-02 and then fall to 24.9 percent in PY 02-03. Unemployment in the non-reservation areas is expected to fall from the PY 00-01 rate of 26.0 percent to 25.2 percent in PY 01-02 and then arrive at 24.8 percent in PY 02-03.

Issues of Concern

- Slow growth
- High unemployment

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security, Research Administration, November 2001.